THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION QUARTERLY RECORD.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED

"THE RAGGED SCHOOL UNION MAGAZINE."

"YES, suffer them—the dust upon thy purple,
Oh, Island Queen of the far surging sea,
Imperial Albion!—by the wayside scattered,
Though vile and noisome weeds they seem to be;
There is in each a germ of mighty power,
A soul to answer at the judgment hour.

"Crime-soiled and travel-stained, forlorn and weary,
Poor highway outcasts of the world's disdain,
The leprosy of nations—they inherit
Scorn, and neglect, and vice, and woe, and pain;
Yet snow-plumed seraphim, on pinions fleet,
Would gladly bear the *least* to Jesus' feet."

VOLUME II.

LONDON:
RAGGED SCHOOL UNION, 1, EXETER HALL;
KENT & CO., PATERNOSTER ROW.
AND ALL BOOKSELLERS.

PREFACE—REVIEW.

THE present is the second annual volume of our *Quarterly* issue, making the twenty-ninth with those of its predecessor—the *Monthly*. The work fostered by the joint publications is not only going on, but, we are glad to say, is extending.

When the Education Act, 1870, was passed, it was intimated that it would be well for the promoters and supporters of the Ragged Schools to consider whether the time had not arrived to shorten the cords and loosen the stakes of the Ragged School movement, with a view to the removal of their tentative erections. Doubtless some, perhaps many, friends and co-workers of past years accepted the intimation, and ceased their labours in this special work-field. Their secession was certainly a source of great weakness to the cause, and of great discouragement to those they left to carry on the work without them. More than seven years have passed since the Education Bill became law. In that period great efforts have been made by the School Board to overtake the educational necessities of London by providing school places for the children, and getting the children to fill them. Nevertheless, the Ragged Class exists amongst us. Its existence is so patent to those who best know their localities and their habits as to lead them to the conclusion that the number has not lessened, that the class is as numerous now as it was thirty years since. In those thirty years London has nearly doubled her population. In 1851 its people numbered 2,362,236. It is now, the closing quarter of 1877, considered to be 4,000,000. If the Ragged Class have not increased in proportion to the general population, we may take credit for a reduction of the number by one half that would have existed had the Ragged School effort never been made.

It is no fault of the Education Act, or of the School Board, that the Ragged Class exists; it existed 300 years ago, as we have shown on page 130. It also existed 100 years ago, as we have shown on page 134, and it still exists, notwithstanding our Christ's Hospitals, our British Schools, our Sunday Schools, and our Ragged Schools. It has, however, been *scotched* by Ragged Schools, and it would seem that the power of the *drag* is increasing. On page 87 we gave the results of the year's work, showing the increasing numbers brought under Christian teaching as compared with previous years. Those results are thus summarised:—

The attendants at Sunday Schools, at Mothers' Meetings, at Ragged Churches, and at Night Schools, numbered	in 1875	...	40,149
Do. do.	in 1876	...	42,119
Do. do.	in 1877	...	46,130

It would thus seem that at the end of the last seven years, instead of the Ragged School Union adopting the "intimation" of seven years ago, it is lengthening its cords and strengthening its stakes, and that its tentative erection is taking a new lease of tenure.

Another step in advance in the moral elevation of the people was taken by Parliament in the last session by passing the Canal Boats Act by which it is hoped the educational, the moral, as well as the sanitary condition of the Bargemen's families will be greatly promoted.

We cannot close our editorial labours for 1877 without thanking those of our friends who have kindly aided us either by their suggestions or their contributions, and we shall be glad to receive similar aid from any persons engaged in promoting man's welfare and extending the Redeemer's kingdom.

1, EXETER HALL, W.C. EDITOR.
October, 1877.

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